DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 158 800 JC 780 457

AUTHOR Rogers, Raymond
TITLE An Assessment of the Past and Present Decision-Making Process Within an Organization With a Case for a Structural Change.
INSTITUTION Mount Wachusett Community Coll., Gardner, Mass.
PUB DATE Jun 78
NOTE 30p.; Best copy available

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Faculty; Community Colleges; Decentralization; *Decision Making; Faculty Organizations; Institutional Research; *Junior Colleges; Management Systems; *Organizational Change; *Power Structure; Small Colleges; Teacher Participation; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

The change in the organizational structure and goals of Mount Wachusett Community College (Massachusetts) from its inception to its current state is analyzed with respect to decision-making concerning staffing. At its infancy, the administration is seen as a rational focal structure; a central power grants resources and staff members are afforded flexibility in their overlapping roles. With an increase in the size of the institution (from 50 to 1,500 students) has come the staff specialist, representative of bureaucratic functions. The bureaucracy is characterized by: (1) constant striving for increased functions and power, (2) lack of initiative and flexibility, (3) a tendency to defer decisions to superiors, and (4) a tendency to impede action with red tape. The proposed alternative to these structures is a permanent committee with elected members to replace department heads, thus allowing participation in decision-making by those most closely involved with the problem and implementation of any solution. Organizational charts for each structure and a bibliography are included. (MB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

- ED158800

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Raymond Rogers

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE PAST AND PRESENT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION WITH A CASE FOR A STRUCTURAL CHANGE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

by

RAYMOND ROGERS

June 1978

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS 01440

Jc 780 457

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1.
II.	THE BEGINNINGS OF AN ORGANIZATION	3.
	EXHIBIT 1	5.
	EXHIBIT 2	6.
III.	THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION	7.
	EXHIBIT 3	8.
	EXHIBIT 4	9.
	EXHIBIT 5	13.
IV.	A PROPOSED STRUCTURAL CHANGE	16.
V.	CONCLUSIONS	19.
BIBLIOGRAPHY		21.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

An organization is two or more people working towards a common goal. An organization is "characterized by a division of labor, power and communication responsibilities which are not random but deliberately planned, the presence of one or more power centers which control the concerted efforts of the organization and must be reviewed continuously, and a method of substituting personnel."[1]

"Let us note now the issues in organizations can be resolved on the basis of a decision-centered theory. For instance, should an organization be tall or flat? This issue should be decided on the basis of what one believes concerning decision-making."[2] "An understanding of the decision-making process in a particular enterprise is the key to its organizational structure."[3]

This paper will examine the organization of a Massachusetts community college at its infancy with an enrollment of fifty students, and as it is today with an enrollment of 1500 students and a full

---

[1]Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 3.

[2]Daniel E. Griffiths, Administrative Theory (New York: Appleton-Century-Craft, 1959), p. 80.

[3]Ibid, p. 80.

complement of an administrative bureaucracy. A bureaucracy is typified by a specialization of functions, and Max Weber bestows it with a "series of characteristics - precision, continuity, discipline, strictness and reliability."[4]

As the organization's clients, students, alter their choice of courses and programs, so are the needs and requirements of faculty staffing altered within various disciplines. The focus is upon the process by which decisions are made with regard to faculty staffing.

To examine how the organization's structure handles changes in staffing, the author will exhibit how the organization has structurally dealt with growth from its infancy to the present. A case will be made for an alternative organization structure designed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the decision-making process as it affects faculty staffing.

---

[4]Martin Albrow, Bureaucracy (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 45.

CHAPTER II

THE BEGINNINGS OF AN ORGANIZATION

In Massachusetts the public community college system began in the early 1960's and has continually expanded in modules. The intent is to have educational facilities located throughout the State such that no resident must travel more than thirty minutes to avail themselves of the services. Also, with the community or neighborhood educational facility located within such areas, the institutions will remain responsive to serving the area and its residents' needs.

> It is the goal of the Massachusetts Regional Community Colleges to provide residents of the Commonwealth with an optimum opportunity for access to a college education consistent with their interest and aptitudes and to reduce to a minimum the economic, social, psychological, and academic barriers to educational opportunity.[5]

The size of the educational facility, module, is designed so as to be most efficient and effective in terms of student-faculty-staff contact and involvment, physical facilities, and administrative hierarchy. These modules are to have a student enrollment of not more than 2500 students and a predetermined organization structure of not more than three levels (President, Deans, Department Heads, and faculty/staff).

---

[5]Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges, "Admission to Massachusetts Regional Community Colleges Policy," November 12, 1976.

The beginning organization as shown by the Positional and Functional Organization Charts in Exhibits 1 and 2, respectively, is of a simple structure dominated by the 'taskmaster' at the top and other personnel who 'wore many hats.' This rational 'focal organization' with a well-defined goal of serving and establishing its identity within the community exercised a high degree of decision-making autonomy. The personnel within this structure were granted a great deal of flexibility in their overlapping roles.

The traditional or classic organization with its legitimized power granted by the single resource (The Central Office), and geographic separation from this resource, takes on an authoritative personality. For all decisions are made by a single element.

One's decisions are a functior of the data and time available. With this structure there exists no levels of hierarchy that are able to filter or distort the data or manifest a time delay.

The decision-making process, however, is limited to the resources of a few, if not one individual who has little aid in data gathering or developing alternatives. Thus, the personality of the staff closely reflects the ideology of the single decision-maker. The 'Caesar Organization is a comparative term in administration where the founder of an organization - political, social, religious or educational, are usually unique in their talents applied at their partic-

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Positional Organization Chart

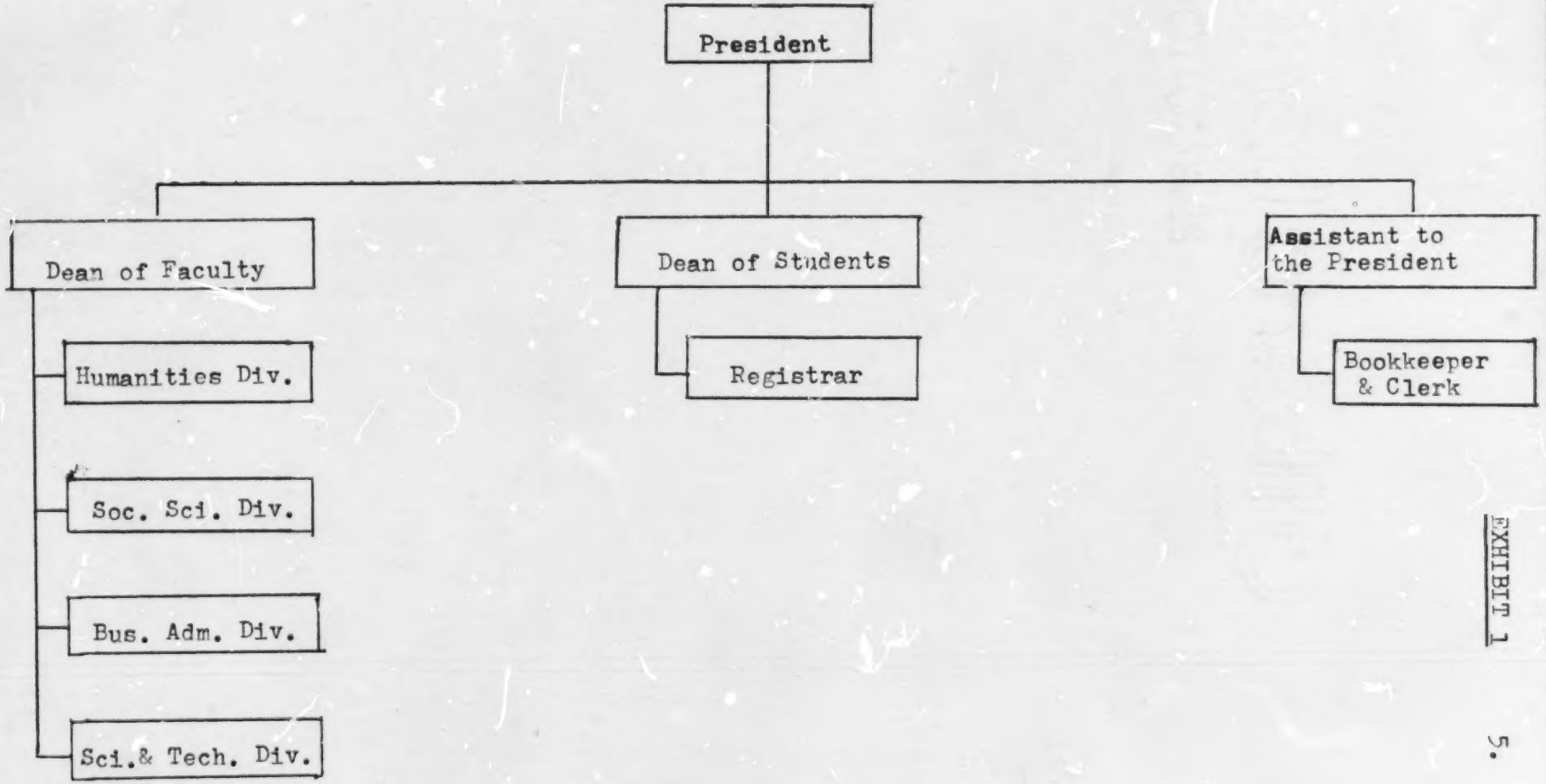


EXHIBIT 1

5.

APPENDIX A

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Functional Organization Chart

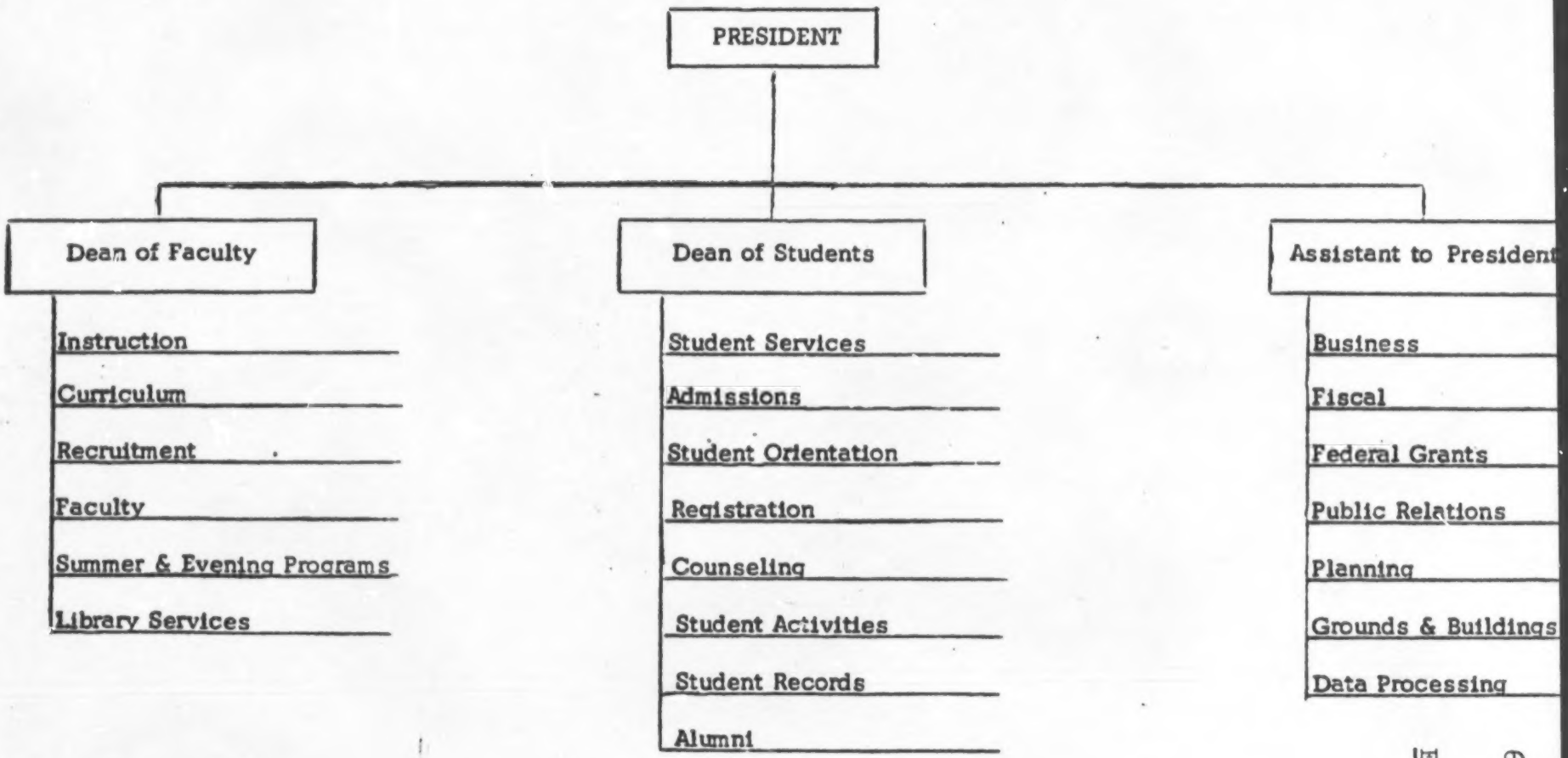


EXHIBIT 2

ular time and opportunity. They create an organization difficult to explain, impossible to teach or imitate."[6]

CHAPTER III

THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION

"With the increase in size has come the staff specialist, representative of the bureaucratic functions. Exhibits 3 and 4 display the Positional and Functional Organizational Charts, respectively. Presently there are a total of 62 faculty members serving 1500 students and a professional administrative staff of 29. The operational mode of the organization's bureaucracy may be "characterized by specialization of functions marked by:

1. constant striving for increased functions and power,
2. lack of initiative and flexibility,
3. tendency to defer decisions to superiors, and
4. tendency to impede action with red tape."[7]

The decision-making process during the period of growth as regards faculty staffing (hiring) was directed to the individual Department Heads. In turn, each vying

---

[6]Ernest Dale, The Great Organizers (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p.32.

[7]Webster's 3rd International Dictionary.

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Positional Organization Chart

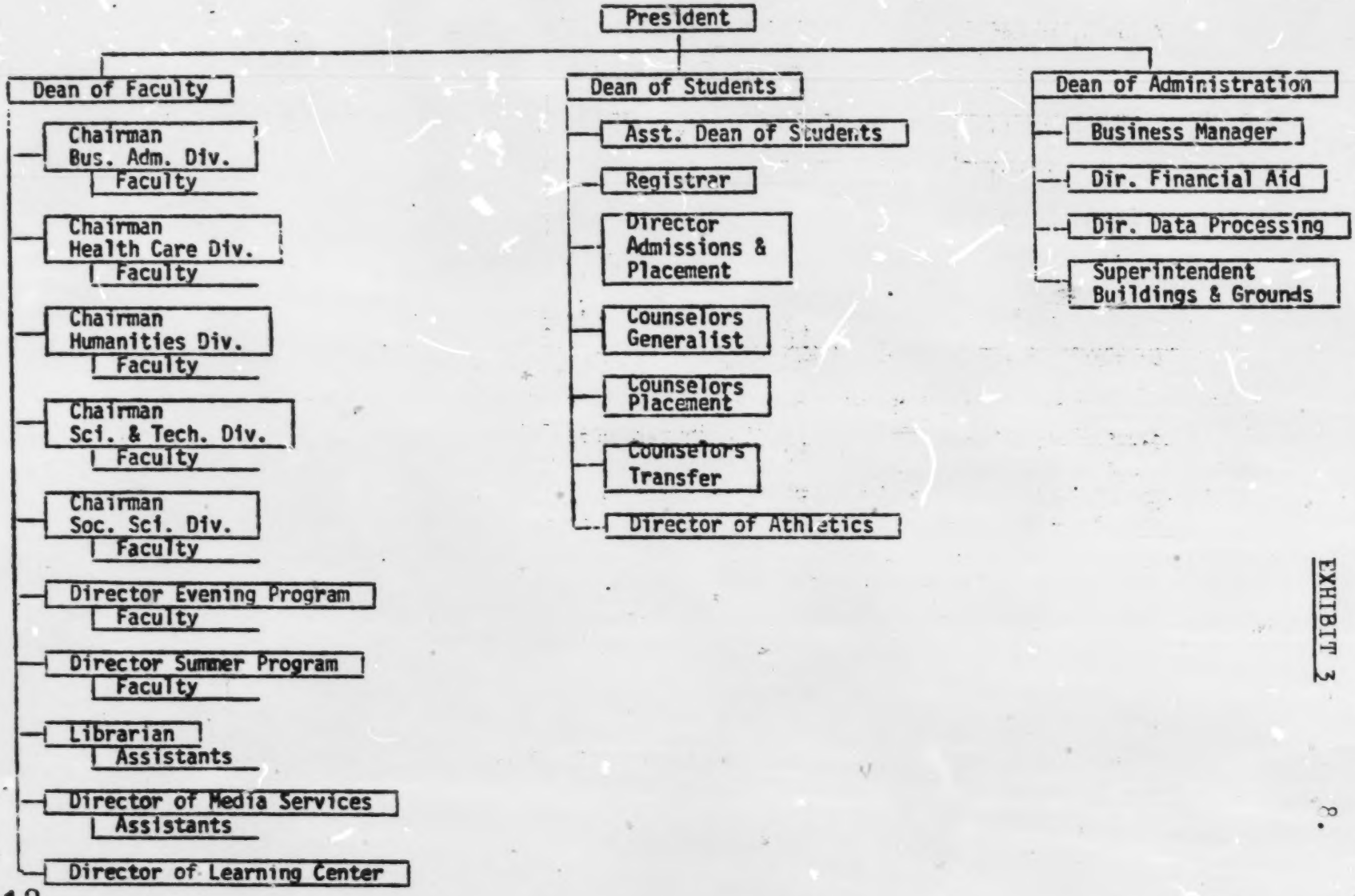


EXHIBIT 3

MOUNT WACHUSETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Functional Organization Chart

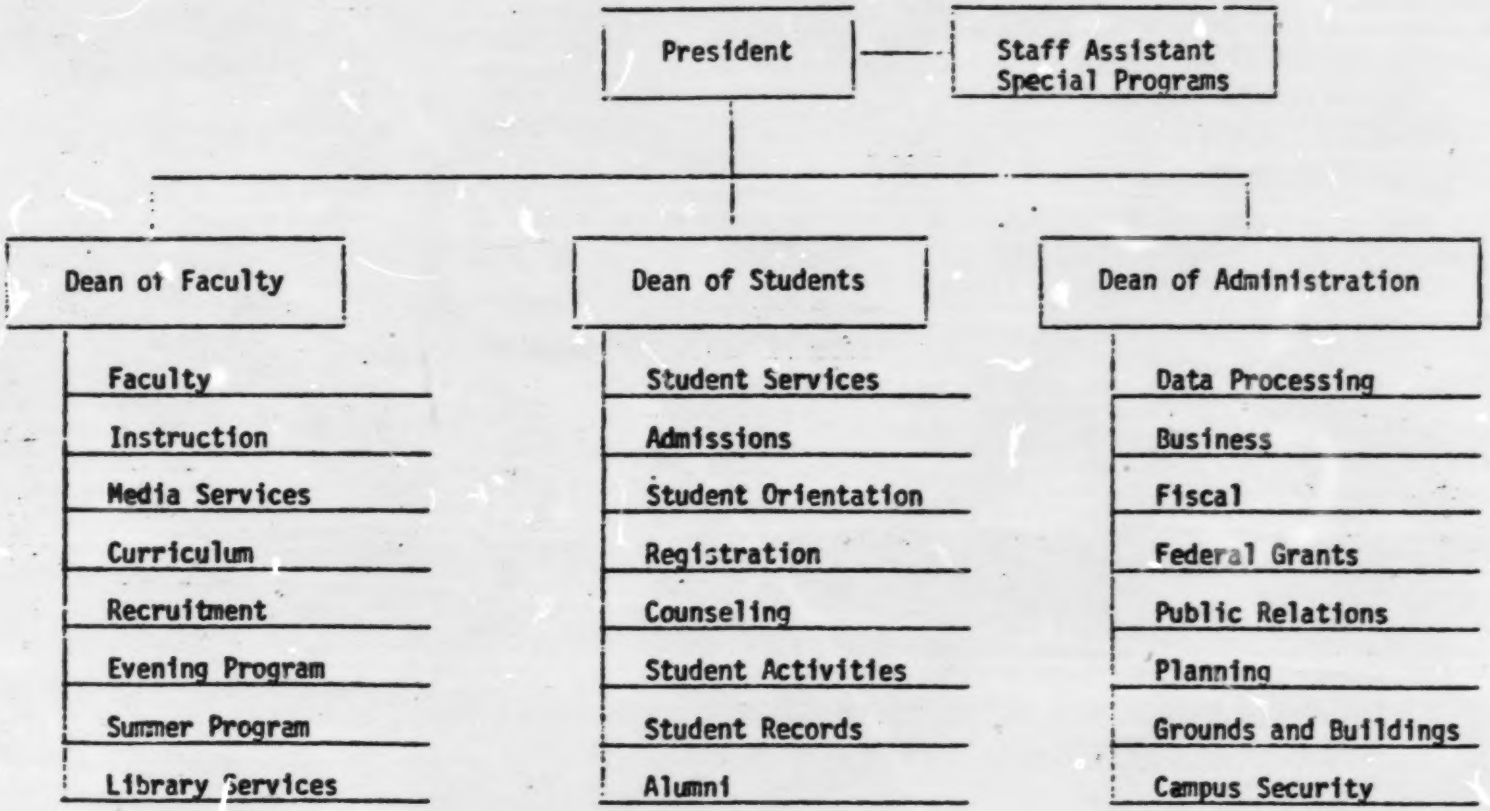


EXHIBIT 4

for increased power and/or influence through the number of programs and faculty under their direct control. The organization's goal of "Service to Man and His World"[8] translated into being all things to everyone. For any deficiency or "defect in the organization's bureaucratic machinery, the remedy always took the form of further machinery."[9]

"The goal concept is vital in organizational analysis. Goals serve as guides for what happens in an organization. If the concept of goals is not used, organizational behavior becomes a random occurence."[10]

As the organization grew, the achievements of the individual personnel within the administration and, also, faculty were being realized within a short period of time. However, with each achievement, one's aspiration level subsequently rose. "The disparity between aspiration level and achievement produces individual conflict within an organization."[11]

With the advent of level funding, increased accounta-

---

[8]Mount Wachusett Community College Catalog, 1975-77, p.5.

[9]Albrow, op. cit., p. 21.

[10]Richard H. Hall, Organizations, Structures and Process (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), p. 195.

[11]J. March and H. Simon, Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1958), p. 120.

bility and the changing student enrollments, such disparities became more apparent which is a consequence when "the munificence of the environment undergoes a sudden downward shift or period of non-growth."[12]

Each Department Head had previously operated somewhat mutually exclusive of one another, enhancing individual empires. Indicative of Likert's System 2, the Department Heads operated on a one-to-one basis with the Dean of Faculty and in competition with each other.

The decision-making process, whereby each Department Head had full authority with regard to faculty staffing, becomes inoperative given the changing demands for faculty in various disciplines and a heavily tenured staff. The level funding, increased accountability and the changing client demands are the basis of intergroup conflict. The Department Heads, thus, needed information and cooperation from and amongst themselves. Each embracing differing goals and differing perceptions of the reality of the situation.[13] "An organization reacts to intergroup conflict by four major processes: problem-solving, persuasion, bargaining and politics."[14]

---

[12]Ibid.

[13]March, op. cit., p. 121.

[14]Ibid., p. 129.

One cannot ignore the "informal organization which is present in every formal organization and is the system of interpersonal relations which forms to affect decisions made in the formal organization. This informal system is omitted from the formal scheme or is in opposition to it. The informal organization is a dynamic structure composed of special interest groups."[15]

The organization has reacted to the conflict of staffing with the obvious alternative of dismissing personnel in certain departments and hiring new personnel for the growing departments. Given the tenure status of many of the faculty, the legal ramifications and its effects upon the morale of the focal organization, in fact the organizational-set, other alternatives are being pursued through the employment of ad hoc committees, such as an Ad Hoc Marketing/Recruiting Committee, a new Faculty Senate, and new Faculty Committees as shown in Exhibit 5.

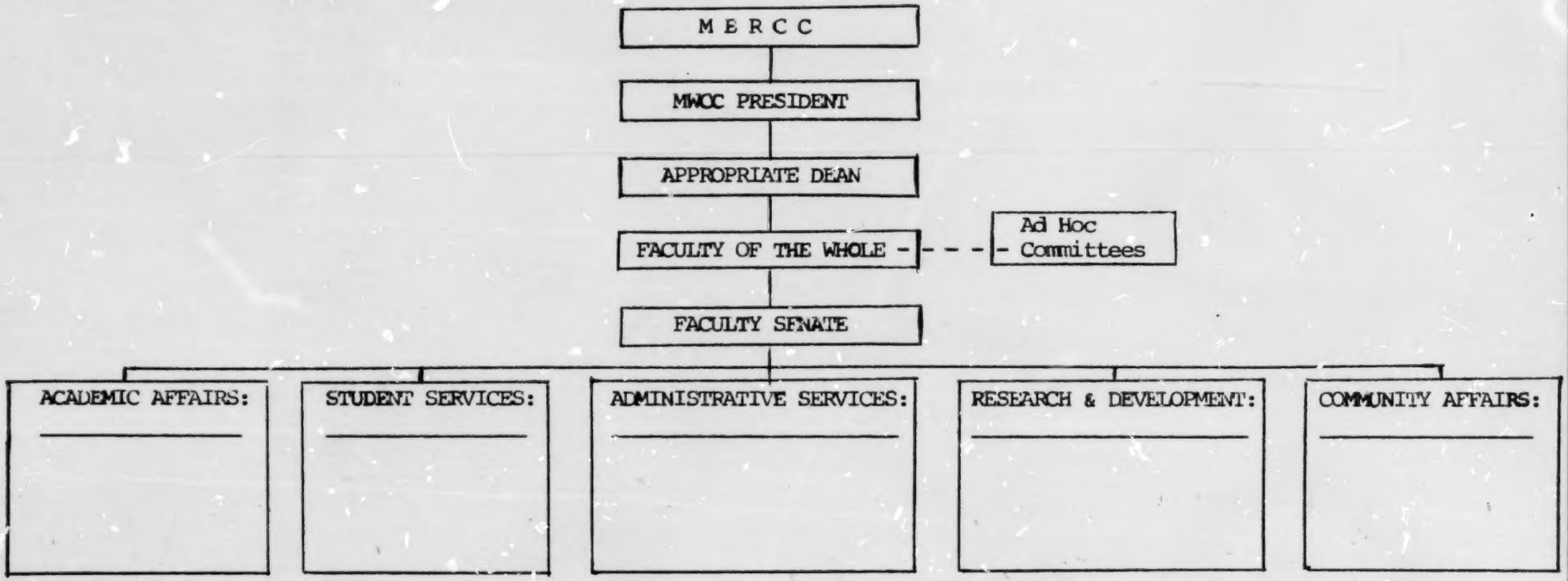
The bureaucracy, as it has been known, is threatened by "rapid and unexpected change, growth in the size and number of activities, complexity of modern technology, and change in managerial behavior."[16] This change in managerial behavior is described as: "the new concept of man, based on increased knowledge replacing the innocent push-button

---

[15]Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 115.

[16]Warren G. Bennis, "The Coming Death of Bureaucracy" Emerging Patterns of Administration (California: McCutchan Publishers, 1971), p. 54.

NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL



Membership:

1 Each Division
1 Learning Center
1 Student
Dean of Faculty
(ex officio,
non-voting)

Membership:

1 Each Division
1 Learning Center
2 Students
Admissions Director
Dean of Students
(ex officio,
non-voting)

Membership:

1 Classified (at large)
2 Faculty (at large)
1 Student
Supt. Bldgs. & Grounds
Police Chief
Business Manager
Dean of Adminstration
(ex officio,
non-voting)

Membership:

1 Each Division
1 Learning Center
1 Student
Registrar
Dir. Data Proc.
1 Dean (appt. by Pres.)
(ex officio,
non-voting)

Membership:

Dir. Instr. Media
2 Students
3 Fac. (at large)
2 Community Members
(appointed by Pres.)
Dean of Cont. Ed/
Community Service
(ex officio,
non-voting)

13.

EXHIBIT 5

idea of man; power, based on collaboration and reason replacting coercion and threat; and organizational values, based on humanistic democratic ideals replacing the depersonalized mechanistic value system."[17]

The adaptation of ad hoc committees has arisen in response to "the modern conditions of accelerating specialization and professionalization."[18] Warren Bennis in Beyond Bureaucracy specifies it as the "post bureaucratic organization form manifesting itself in such temporary units as task force, inter-agency teams. The organization itself becomes a hierarchy of committees, not departments, whose membership shifts on the basis of the task to be performed and the knowledge needed. The decision becomes a product of groups.

Hence, the administration ratifies decisions that have already been made by groups possessing the necessary specialized knowledge, which in turn has already been tested for reliability and relevance by still other groups."[19]

The present organization structure with its full complement of administrative bureaucracy has reacted to the changing client demands by the establishment of ad hoc

---

[17]J. Weinman and T. Wolner, "Post-Bureaucratic Organization and Education Innovation." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 120 962 April 1970, p. 5.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid.

committees and creating new standing committees. These committees are a result of the acknowledgment of identification of a problem(s). The committees serve the decision-making process in performing the functions of gathering data, developing alternatives, analyzing and synthesizing various options, and making the recommendations to the top administrative hierarchy.

In this type of case, one of two situations exists. The committees are being manipulated into justifying and promulgating the desired recommendation(s) of the administrative hierarchy; or the committees, independent of the administration, are in fact limiting the decisions of the administration to the recommendation(s) of the committee. Thus, they have usurped much of the organization's governance. It is too early to draw any conclusion as to which situation exists; however, one would suspect the result to be somewhere between the two.

CHAPTER IV

A PROPOSED STRUCTURAL CHANGE

The traditional organization with its levels of hierarchy and span of control is composed of specialists who have moved into managerial positions. The first level of management in the organization becomes critical and Rensis Likert characterizes them as serving the 'link-pin' function. These Department Heads are highly trained specialists, educators and researchers, in their particular disciplines. Thrust into the position of Department Head, they are entrusted with all the duties of a generalist requiring the necessary technical, human relations and organization skills.

The process of dealing with declining and changing student enrollments, and the decisions made affecting staffing must be a result of the coordinated efforts of the Department Heads. The Department Heads cannot continue their 'zero sum gaming' where one party's gains are a result of the other party's losses.

Given this organizational structure, the fundamental concern becomes one of maintaining the status quo. "In an ideologically-oriented organization created to handle war, social unrest or psychic disorder, for example, the sacrifice of 'self' for the 'good of the organization' carries

its own rewards. In a career-oriented organization, however, 'self' must be preserved at all cost or there will be no career and no reward."[20]

An alternative structure would not consist of individual Department Heads, but rather a committee or group of five at this level who would be granted the authority to supervise the faculty and the educational programs of the College. The group may or may not be representative of each discipline. It could be determined if membership would be on a three, five, or seven year term elected by the staff in a weighted balloting so that no one Department could monopolize the membership. Thus, the bureaucratic system is not one of "secured individual responsibility, but represents a collegiality where responsibility is a collective one and decisions are by discussions."[21] Changes in personnel are vital for "bureaucracies die of routine."[22]

This group would meet on a regular basis while each member continued to carry a half teaching load as is presently the case for Department Heads in this system. The Dean of Faculty's position would become one of managing a group interactive collaborative, Likert's System 4. As the leader of

---

[20]C. Derr, "Major Causes of Organizational Conflict: Diagnosis for Action." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 120 906 June 1975, p. 7.

[21]Albrow, op. cit., p. 20.

[22]Ibid.

this group, the Dean of Faculty "is seen as a facilitator, an agent who helps smooth the pathway toward goal achievement."[23]

This alteration in the organization structure would necessitate contact between the individuals and an interdependency upon each other. "Tomorrow's 'knowledge organization' is where the decision-making authority is placed in the organization structure according to the flow of information both to and from the individuals."[24] This structure would allow for the specialist to be included into the decision-making process, as presently their capacities are not being fully utilized.

In order to provide its clients with an optimum educational opportunity, the organization structure must be so designed as to be able to react with the changing student demands with a minimum of conflict and upheaval. Individual departments while conducting thier own programs via program coordinators need to coordinate and share resources.

This proposed group would allow for "centralized administration but decentralized operations, making the maximum use of existing staff and facilities rather than replacing the existing system."[25]

---

[23]Warren B. Bennis, Changing Organizations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966), p. 68.

[24]Peter Drucker, People and Performance (New York: Harpers College Press, 1977), p. 76.

[25]Basil Castaldi, "The Expanded Role of Higher Education." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 105 081, 1974, p. 1.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The organization structure of the educational institution has been analyzed with respect to decision-making as it relates to staffing. This has included a review of the goals and the bureaucracy of the institution at its beginning and at the present time.

The analysis has been documented through the writings of educators, researchers and practioners of decision-making and conflict resolution.

There has been displayed a simple organization that evolved into a complex organization. With a limitation in growth, a 'post-bureaucratic' system is emerging characterized by the ad hoc committees and a proposed new committee structure.

The proposed alternative of a permanent committee with elected members to replace the Department Heads reflects a structural innovation of allowing participation by those most closely involved with the problem and the implementation of any solution. Also, it is designed to arouse the level of consciousness of individuals within the organization to the problems, and also for the collective wisdom to be orchestrated by the executive, the Dean of Faculty. "Executive work is specialized work of maintaining the

organization in operations and maintaining a system of cooperation."[26] Thus, the opportunity would exist for the Dean of Faculty to develop, as Blake and Mouton describe, a "management team where work is accomplished from committed people, whose interdependence through a 'common stake' in the organization's purposes leads to relationships of trust and respect."[27]

However, in any endeavor involving the coordinating of human efforts, Sir Francis Bacon reminds us that "in all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once, but must prepare business and so ripen it be degree."

---

[26]Barnard, op. cit., p. 215.

[27]Richard Hodgetts, Management Theory Process and Practice (Philadelphia, Penn.: Saunders Co., 1975), p. 352.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albrow, Martin. Bureaucracy. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.

Bennis, Warren G. Changing Organizations. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966.

Bennis, Warren G. "The Coming Death of Bureaucracy." Emerging Patterns of Administration. California: McCutchan Publishers, 1971.

Barnard, Chester I. The Functions of the Executive. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958.

Castaldi, Basil. "The Expanded Role of Higher Education." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 105 081, 1974.

Dale, Ernest. The Great Organizers. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1960.

Derr, C. "Major Causes of Organizational Conflict: Diagnosis for Action." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 120 906, June 1975.

Drucker, Peter. People and Performance. New York: Harper's College Press, 1977.

Etzioni, Amitai. Modern Organizations. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1964.

Griffiths, Daniel E. Administrative Theory. New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, 1959.

Hall, Richard H. Organizations, Structures and Process New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970.

Hodgetts, Richard. Management Theory Process and Practice. Philadelphia, Penn.: Saunders Co., 1975.

March, J. and Simon, H. Organizations. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1958.

Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges. "Admission to Massachusetts Regional Community Colleges Policy." November 12, 1976.

Mount Wachusett Community College Catalog, 1975-77.

Webster's 3rd International Dictionary.

Weinman, J. and Wolner, T. "Post-Bureaucratic Organization and Education Innovation." Research in Education. ERIC. ED 120 962, April 1970.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 6 1978

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES